

Homesickness does sometimes happen, here's some tips...

Camp is a lot of fun and a wonderful experience - but it is pretty normal for children to be homesick at camp. Here are some ideas for preparing your camper (and yourself as a parent) for the possibility of homesickness. Campers of all ages can get homesick...

While Preparing for Camp...

- Spend some time focusing with your child on the fun activities that your child will do at camp.
- Come visit the camp with your camper (call the camp to set up a visit)
- Talk to your camper about homesickness
 - Remind them that everyone gets homesick sometimes
 - Talk to your child about experiences in which you yourself were homesick
- Register for Camp with a friend
- Pack in preparation for homesickness
 - A favourite blanket or stuffed animal
 - Letter writing material to write a letter/draw a picture with a highlight from each day
 - Pack a disposable camera so your child can document their fun

When you arrive at the Camp...

- Be enthusiastic about the things you see
- Meet one of your campers Counsellors
- Meet our Camp Directing Team
- Chat with your Camper's Counsellor
- Help your camper set up their bunk

While your camper is at Camp...

- Send your camper an email - on our website or by through ryersonforward@gmail.com
- Send mail before your camper arrives so that they receive them while at camp
- Ensure that the camp has accurate contact numbers in case your child
- Call us to see how your child is doing (we ask that you not call to speak with your child since that may make other campers homesick)

Some things not to do...

Of course, we respect that you know your camper best, these are just some tips based on our years of experience. They may not be helpful for your camper.

- We ask that parents **not** tell their camper that they can call home. If this is necessary our camp staff will arrange this but we try to avoid this since it can often make things more difficult.
- We suggest that parents **not** tell their camper that they will come get them if they want to go home early. Certainly is this is best for your camper this can happen, but we find that when camper are expecting this they do not do as well.

How we approach Homesickness at Ryerson...

- Our camp staff pride themselves on our individual attention to each camper. When a child is homesick we try to work with them to focus on the fun they are having and what activities they are looking forward to. All our staff are trained in helping camper have a great time even when homesick.
- In cases of extreme homesickness one of our leadership staff will call home to see what direction parents would like to take
- If needed, a phone call can be arranged between the camper and home
- If parents decided that it is best for their child, they can pick the camper up early

More on Homsickness

This is a great article by Dr. Susan Lin on talking to children about homesickness...

<http://life.familyeducation.com/summer-camp/anxiety/36348.html?detoured=1>